



From the teachings of the Rosh Yeshiva of Ateret Yerushalayim
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner Shlit"א

Parashat Ki Tisa - #318

Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion

Visit our blog: www.ravaviner.com

New HEBREW Book by RavAviner:
Commentary on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Vol. 3 – Hilchot Shabbat
To order: www.havabooks.co.il

On the Parashah...
Spiritual Repair
[Tal Chermon p. 181]

After the sin of the Golden Calf came the spiritual repair. It is true that there are crises in the world. The world is not a plain. There are mountains and valleys. We cannot deny it. We know that there are crises, but there is no need to panic on account of them. We can overcome the crises and spiritually repair ourselves through the Divine treatment found in the world of the Torah given to us by Moshe Rabbenu. The Torah can only be properly fulfilled after first stumbling in it (Gittin 43a). By overcoming difficulties one attains a great possession. We received a second set of the Ten Commandments and repaired our relationship with Hashem. Out of the crisis of the sin of the Golden Calf, we clarified our proper relationship with Torah and with the Divine Presence which dwells among us.

Rav Aviner on...
Serving Hashem through Emotion or Intellect

Question: How should one serve Hashem through emotion or intellect?

Answer: It is written on almost every page of the book "Mesillat Yesharim" that one must serve Hashem through intellect. A person is obligated to be good and to distance himself from evil. How can a person improve himself? Answer: through intellect. The intellect is the main power of a person. The fact that you have emotions does not make you a man. Animals also possess emotion. Apes, for example, have an incredibly strong motherly emotion, to the point of self-sacrifice. They hold their babies for five years even when they are gathering food or fighting off an enemy. Like us, animals have emotions, a body, desires, imaginations, etc. The Rambam therefore writes in "Shemoneh Perakim" (chapter 1) that the intellect must reign over all of these powers. The intellect is the king. Not a ruler who murders all of his citizens so he can reign all by himself, but one who takes care of them. Rabbi Yehudah Halevi also wrote this in the book "Ha-Kuzari" (in the third section) when he discussed the righteous person, one who is similar to a king who provides for the needs of his citizens. When he asks them to rally around the flag, they come running. The same applies to the intellect which gives each human being his status and role. The intellect examines if a given emotion is positive or negative. If you are excited about our state and army, this is a good emotion. But being excited by some actor – what kind of emotion is this?! A person certainly needs to be excited – if he does not he is not human – but the question is what is he excited about. How can we know which emotion has deep meaning and which does not? This is the job of the intellect. We learn Torah and know what is right and wrong. To our distress, it is true that emotion and imagination control most people of the world, but we are not discussing what exists, but what should exist. What should exist is the intellect as the main power. The intellect is the company commander which gives the orders. Emotion began ruling the world with the sin of Adam. Hashem said: do not eat from this tree. "But it is beautiful..." and so he ate from the tree. From that time, man has not been directly controlled by his intellect, but has been enslaved to emotions and imagination. But Hashem had mercy on us and gave us the Torah which teaches us what is good and evil, what is a mitzvah and what is a transgression, what is a law and what is a stringency, etc. We therefore know how to act in the world, and we can

examine an emotion through the intellect. For example, "I hate you" – the Torah says "Do not hate people." "I am jealous" – the Torah says "Do not be jealous." "But I have a powerful emotion" – the Torah says "Do not be jealous of another person." The Torah clarifies for us prohibited emotions which must be eliminated, permissible emotions which can remain, and supreme emotions which should be strengthened.

In the News...

Senior Rabbis Insists Jews Should Decline Spanish Passport

For Rav Aviner's opinion see:

www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/177306#.UvpfUqsUHIU



Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528

www.ateret.org.il To subscribe, send e-mail to: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

